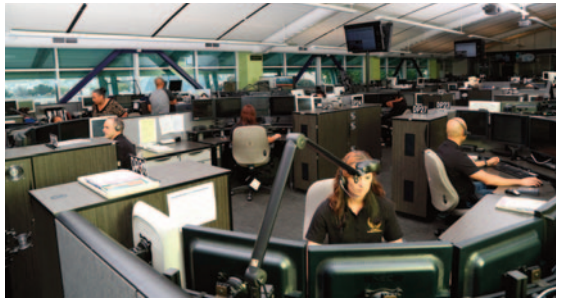
Make the Call!



It is important to report every serious crime. Please take a moment to make a difference or save a life. Use your smart phone to call before you shoot that viral video to ensure help is on the way.

9-1-1 for People

- Crime in Progress (suspects present or recently departed)
- Accidents or Medical Emergency
- Mentally Unwell or Suicidal Individual
- People Blocking Sidewalks
- Drug Distribution or Open Use

3-1-1 or 415-553-0123 Non Emergency Events or Things

- Crimes where suspect gone, such as car break-in or theft
- Homeless encampments
- Broken street light, traffic light or sidewalk trip hazard
- Fallen power line, tree branch, or other objects

9-8-8 Crisis Counseling

Refer when person is not threating immediate self-harm and wants to talk with a professional.

- Suicidal Ideation
- Depressed or Anxiety

Why Call?

- To prevent person(s) from further harming you, themselves or others.
- To begin the criminal justice process when appropriate.
- City resources are data-driven; “if it’s not recorded it didn’t happen” and departments are less likely to assign resourses to areas with fewer issues.

castro community on patrol

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SF Emergency Response

San Francisco first-responder teams operate separately but in cooperation with each other to provide community safety. Starting in 2020, many of the services provided by police were moved to other speciality groups to free officer time for law enforcement activities. This also allows people who fear law enforcement to be more likely to accept services. All services are reached through 911 or 311. (See back page)



Police: Officers provide crime and traffic enforcement or support for other teams if a risk due to threats or weapons exists. Most officers are CIT (Critical Incident Trained) certified for compasssionate care until specialists arrive.



Fire: The primary work is fire suppression. An engine or truck may be dispatched in most medical calls because at least one EMT or paramedic is part of each fire team. Simarily, EMS is part of every fire response.



EMS: Emergency Medical Service teams arrive in red or white SFFD ambulances. Some calls are served by private ambulances sub-contracted for additional capacity. SCRT and other teams cannot transport patients, requiring an EMS dispatch if transport is required.



SCRT: The Street Crisis Response Team arrives in red SFFD vehicles but cannot transport patients. They include a behavioral health clinician and a peer specialist with lived experience. SFPD may also be dispatched to protect SCRT workers if violence is possible, but police officers are not the primary responders.



SORT/SWRT: Additional SFFD teams make up the Street Overdose Response and the Street Wellness Response teams. These teams have more specific training than the SCRT members when drugs or other medical complications exist.



Homeless Outreach: Teams from DPH (Department of Health) or DEM (Department of Emergency Management) address various needs of the unhoused population for service-first outreach. This includes the Homeless Outreach Team (HOT), Encampment Resolution Team (ERT) and Healthy Streets Operation Center (HSOC).

Understanding Laws

SELF-DEFENSE

“Any action which uses the minimum force necessary to prevent your or others injury or death, where a real and reasonable threat, or belief of threat, to physical well being is unjustly presented.” You MAY be justified in claiming self-defense when:

1. The threat is current, immediate and unavoidable.
2. Your level of force is appropriate for the level of threat presented.
3. Your use of force stops as soon as the threat to you (or someone else you are defending) ceases.

ASSAULT VS BATTERY

Assault is the threat or attempt to cause physical harm, while battery is the actual, unconsented physical contact. You can think of Assault as "the swing" and Battery as "the hit". California laws treat these as two separate crimes but they often happen together.

Assault:

Physical contact is not required; a verbal threat of violence can be charged.

- Key elements: The perpetrator must have the present ability to carry out the threat, and the victim must be aware of the impending danger.
- Examples: Raising a fist to punch someone, pointing a weapon, or throwing an object and missing.

Battery:

- Examples: Punching or slapping someone, spitting on them, or aggressively grabbing an item out of their hand (which is legally treated as an extension of their person).
- Key elements: The contact must be unconsented and harmful or insulting.
- Physical harm or visible injury is not required. The offense of touching completes the crime.

HATE CRIME ENHANCEMENTS

California has one of the strongest hate crime laws in the nation and San Francisco Police and District Attorney departments vigorously enforce the laws when applicable. However, a “Hate Crime” does not exist by itself; it can only be added as an enhancement to another crime such as verbal assault, battery, graffiti, arson, or homicide. If hate can be proven, enhanced punishment can be added during the sentencing if the subject is found guilty.

Requirements for enhancement:

- Hate Speech by itself is not a crime no matter how vile.
- Hate as a motivation include:
  - Race
  - Ethnicity or National Origin
  - Religion
  - Sexual Preference
  - Gender Identity

Report suspicions to the responding officer if you believe hate motivated the crime. The CAD (Computer Aided Dispatch) system includes a setting that triggers further investigation by the Police or District Attorney.

Understanding 911 Calls



Dial: All calls go to the DEM Emergency Response Center on Turk Street. 911 calls are answered ahead of non-emergency (311 or 415-553-0123) calls.

Call Taker: The person answering your call must ask certain questions:

- Nature of your call
- Your Phone Number for call-backs (from a blocked phone number)
- Street Address of incident (must be asked twice)
- Cross Streets to confirm correct location
- Description of Event, Suspects, Direction of Travel, etc.

Dispatcher: As you work with the Call Taker, they are already communicating with one or more Dispatchers via the CAD system who route SFPD, SFFD, and/or EMS according to the severity of the call. A unit may already be headed toward you while you are still on the call.

Response: The Call Taker and Dispatcher determine response priority:

- A Priority (Code 3; Emergency with Lights & Siren)
- B Priority (Code 2; Urgent but no Lights/Siren)
- C Priority (When time allows)